

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 10-13 are pending in the present application. No additional claims fee is believed to be due.

Claims 4-9 are canceled without prejudice. Corresponding claims are issuing in allowed parent patent application SN 09/642,681 on January 6, 2004 as US Patent 6,673,158

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the fibers in the center of the web are unbonded, or if bonded a gradient of thermal bonding level exists. Antecedent support for the amendment can be found in the specification at page 3, lines 10 – 19 and page 4, lines 14-27. Claim 1 has also been amended to include a “period” at the end of the claim.

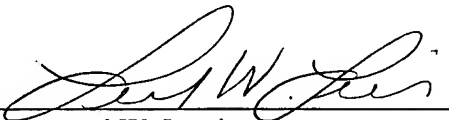
In addition, new Claims 10-13 have been added. Antecedent support for Claims 10 and 12, directed toward a claimed web density, can be found in the specification at page 9, lines 9-10. Antecedent support for Claims 11 and 13, directed toward fiber length, can be found at page 5, lines 6-7.

It is believed these changes do not involve any introduction of new matter. Consequently, entry of these changes is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicants have made an earnest effort to place their application in proper form and to distinguish the invention as now claimed from the applied references. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, entry of the amendments presented herein, and allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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